

Alphonse the Camel

Was it the straw that broke the camel's back? Read the story that follows and produce a reasoned analysis of the causes of Alphonse's death making use of as many cause categories as possible.



Once upon a time there was a camel (called Alphonse). For various reasons (relating to an unfortunate accident during his birth) the camel had severe back problems. This was not the end of his misfortune, however, because he had an evil exploitative owner (called Frank the Camel Killer) who regularly overloaded his camels prior to taking them on gruelling and totally unnecessary round trips up and down mountains on his way to deliver goods to his customers. These customers, shockingly, were completely indifferent to these frequent and gross violations of the rights of camels and found Frank and his antics at least vaguely endearing.

Well, one Friday, Frank had just finished loading-up Alphonse and his poor exploited fellow creatures for yet another gruelling and totally unnecessary round trip up and down the mountains. He had piled and piled and piled up the goods onto Alphonse's back and was taking a break and reflecting smugly on his handiwork, chewing a straw. On a whim he decided to add the bedraggled straw he had been chewing to Alphonse's load. Alphonse groaned obligingly. He eyed his owner with disgust. He keeled over and died of radical and irreversible back collapse.